

**Amendments to the Claims:**

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

**Listing of Claims:**

Claims 1-12 (canceled)

Claim 13 (currently amended) A maximum likelihood (ML) sparse decoder for block codes comprising:

a hypothesis generator operational to iterate over all possible values of a predetermined transport format combination indicator (TFCI);

a code word generator operational to generate a corresponding encoded TFCI for the hypothesis that is being decoded in a desired iteration;

a correlator operational to correlate the corresponding encoded TFCI to the ~~soft~~ output of an associated rake receiver, the correlator comprising:

a plurality of multiplexers, each multiplexer having a first input for receiving a corresponding bit of the received transport format combination indicator (TFCI) signal, a second input for receiving the sign of the corresponding bit of the received transport format combination indicator (TFCI) signal, and a control input for receiving a corresponding bit of the encoded TFCI generated by the code word generator, and

a summer for adding the outputs of the multiplexers to generate a final correlation value; and

a maximum finder operational to compare the final correlation value result for the current iteration with that of the immediately previous iteration to determine the most correlated hypothesis.

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Amendment dated December 5, 2008  
Response to Office Action mailed December 5, 2008

Claims 14-16 (canceled)